

August 27, 2015  
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# THE Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION SINCE 1877

## 10 YEARS AFTER

### Baptists remember Katrina

**GULFPORT, Miss. (BP)** — When Randy Corn arrived in Gulfport in April 2006 with a team of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBD) volunteers, he expected to spend most of his week doing construction projects.

Six months after Hurricane Katrina had devastated the city and virtually the entire Mississippi Gulf Coast, there was plenty of work to keep the whole team busy. The group had already served in the area multiple times and seen many give their lives to Christ.

"We've shared the Gospel with so many people in this community, I don't know if there is anyone else we can share with. I don't know if there's anyone else who hasn't heard the Gospel," Corn thought to himself.

Corn has a natural proclivity toward evangelism and after praying with the homeowner with whom his team was serving on the trip's first morning, he took a look around the neighborhood and spotted a group of young people talking at the end of a driveway. After striking up a conversation with the group, who expressed their gratitude to Southern Baptists for serving their neighborhood, he led one of the young men to faith in Christ.

It would be the first of eight people he would lead to Christ in less than three hours.

Thanks in part to Corn's experience as an SBD volunteer following Hurricane Katrina, he and his wife Ronda became North American Mission Board (NAMB) missionaries and have spent much of the past decade helping train SBD teams in personal evangelism.

Corn, who served on his first SBD team just days after Hurricane Katrina made landfall, was one of nearly 21,000 volunteers from 41 of the 42 Southern Baptist state conventions to participate in the first wave of Baptist Relief efforts following the arrival of Hurricane Katrina on Aug. 29, 2005 to the end of March 2006.

Another 26,000 volunteers would participate in Operation NOAH (New Orleans Area Homes) Rebuild from March 2006 to April 2009. The influx of new volunteers, by far the most who would ever participate in a single SBD response and rebuild effort, would transform future disaster relief efforts by Southern Baptists.

Fritz Wilson, executive director of Disaster Relief for NAMB, calls Hurricane Katrina one of a handful of transformational events in the history of SBD from its inception during Hurricane Beulah in 1967 to the Southern Baptist response after 9/11.



**LEADING THE WAY** — Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBD) volunteers staff a mass feeding facility in Meridian after Hurricane Katrina flattened the Mississippi Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005. Ten years later, SBD officials credit the storm with helping to modernize Southern Baptist disaster response and bring SBD to the attention of a national audience. (BP photo)

Yet no response remotely compares to Hurricane Katrina. "Everyone has their own list of what were the most influential events in SBD," Wilson says, "but everyone has Katrina as the water-mark event in the history of the ministry."

Within the first five years after Hurricane Katrina, the number of trained volunteers would jump by 46% from 51,300 to 95,000 volunteers. In fact SBD trained more than 25,000 new volunteers in the first few months after the hurricane.

see KATRINA on p. 6

**(ABOVE) SYMBOL OF DESTRUCTION** — As Mississippians awoke August 30, 2005, stark symbols of the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina were all around them. One of the most remembered is what remained of First Church, Gulfport, situated just feet from the beach as the storm roared ashore. The church has since relocated eight miles inland, built a state-of-the-art facility on 35 acres, and placed the old beachfront property on the real estate market. (BP photo)

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## From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

### Why they hate us

**T**he world has always been a brutal place for Christians. Jesus Himself warned of the consequences of following Him (Matt. 10:22; Luke 6:22). As it has been from the beginning, so it is today.

We tend to think of the Middle East as the current hot spot for Christian persecution, but we needn't forget what's going on in many other parts of the world, too.

News reports indicate that a 33-year-old, North Korean mother of three was publicly executed before her family for the crime of giving away Bibles in that country. She was apparently not a big-time Bible smuggler, but simply a believer who wanted to share the Good News with others as opportunities arose.

Not only was Ri Hyon Ok killed for her Bible offenses, her parents, husband, and children were condemned to the communist country's dreaded prison system. That's the rule in North Korea — if you offend the totalitarian dictatorship, your family pays the price along with you.

Another Christian woman recently disappeared from the same area near the Chinese border, and her husband and children have also not been seen for some time. It is assumed that she suffered the same fate as Ri Hyon Ok, and that her family is now somewhere in the forlorn vastness of the North Korean gulag.

As evidenced by these and numerous other reports, it would seem an official crackdown on Christians is underway in North Korea. Reliable statistics on the closed country are hard to come by, but observers believe there are less than 30,000 believers left in the country of 25 million people that was known not so long ago as the "Jerusalem of the East" for its widespread Christian practices.

That was then. Now there is reportedly a special prison camp in North Korea to which Christians are taken for exceptionally harsh treatment by the regime.

In the African nation of Somalia, the leader of a Muslim extremist group recently declared, "All Somali Christians must be killed according to the Islamic law." Sheikh Nur Barud also said sharia (Islamic) law does not recognize Christian converts and "we will slaughter them."

True to his word, an Italian nun known as the "Mother Teresa of

Africa" for her thirty years of work in Somalia was murdered outside the children's hospital she founded. A British husband and wife helping to educate Somali children were gunned down in front of the school they started. There have been multiple reports of beheadings of Christians.

The rulers of that anarchic country have apparently set a goal of killing or driving out all Christians in the country, and they have largely succeeded.

Christians in the volatile Indian state of Orissa no longer publicly celebrate Christmas, due to killings and persecutions perpetrated by Hindu extremists in the region. Christians are reportedly able to remain in their homes only if they convert to Hindu when extremist thugs show up at their door. A Christian woman who was driven away but returned from a refugee camp was murdered in short order.

Why are practicing Christians seen as such a threat to so many who would use such extreme violence to silence them? The answer can be found in the Bible, and in history.

When people experience the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ, are baptized in His name, and filled with the Holy Spirit, they fear no earthly power. As a matter of fact, their boldness and righteousness become objects of fear to enemies of the faith, who clearly understand how the very name of Jesus can transform entire populations. That's why they are so quick to seek to snuff out Christianity wherever they can. They know what will happen if it's allowed to spread.

Even more so, Satan understands and he'll use any weapon at his disposal to destroy us.

From our comfortable American churches, let us pray for those bold, righteous Christians around the world who fully understand their fate and yet continue to acknowledge Jesus as Lord and Savior. From our secure homes, let us pray for their families, who are often made to endure cruelty and suffering along with their offending relative. From deep within our souls, let us pray that Jesus will be glorified always and all ways, because we know evil will flee before His face.

After what Jesus did for us — and what these brave Christians are doing for Him — we can do no less.

## Open your mouth for the speechless

**A**n adult hand approaches a glass dish from the right side of the frame, tweezers positioned between the fingers where chopsticks would go. The tweezers pinch a pink fleshy limb, captured clearly by the camera. It is a hand, a wrist and an arm. No shoulder is attached.

In the dish below the tiny arm, I see a leg. Eyeballs and lungs are among the other baby parts identified in the video.

Horribly, some admit they watched these videos but remain unfazed. More than once, Scripture refers to this as people who have "eyes to see but do not see, ears to hear but do not hear" (Ezekiel 12:2).

You and I elected to the U.S. Congress many with these unseeing eyes. On Aug. 3, when the members of the Senate had a chance to pass a game-changing, life-saving bill to defund Planned Parenthood, they didn't.

Be assured, however, this spiritual-physical battle is not over. As long as you and I are breathing, we must fight for those whose first breath is under siege — for the boy who cannot scream from within the womb when a metal instrument approaches to dismember him, and for the girl who cannot run from her medical-school-trained attacker.

Until we have made abortion unimaginable for every sane American, we follow the Apostle Paul's directions: "... let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up" (Galatians 6:9).

We don't have the option of apathy or making excuses, of which there have been plenty. Do not acquiesce to the temptation of putting a trendy spin on this "issue" for the sake of, well, anything at all. It may be cool in your circle to be self-deprecating and apologize for everything under the sun in order to appear relatable.

By no means is this an easy task, but children's lives are certainly worth our trudging through the muck and maneuvering this tight rope to defend them. I implore you, beg in desperation for these lives as fervently as you would your own life.



### Guest opinion

with Sharayah Colter

Philippians 2 tells us to think of others as better than ourselves and to look out for the needs of others before our own. This is one way we live out that passage.

This is not merely an "issue of our times," a platform on which to campaign, a hot-button blog topic, nor a re-tweetable hashtag. This is laying down our lives for our unborn brothers and sisters — something Christ did perfectly when He died on the cross for me and for you.

We have a duty to fight for the earthly lives of the unborn and the eternal lives of those who are convinced that the choice of one should trump the chance of another. "Open your mouth for the speechless, in the cause of all who are appointed to die," we read in Psalm 31:8-9. "Open your mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy."

Resolve that we will be the generation that roars, "No! We will not let you kill innocent life. We won't pay for it with our money, and we will push back with everything on the line. You may call us names, say we're ignorant, blast our reputations, or threaten us to pieces, but we will stand firm.

"We will stand for life. We won't passively allow this to continue in our nation while we go on with the comforts of life, stick our heads in the sand, and make weekend plans.

"We, the servants of the Lord, will not stand down until our commander calls us home.

Colter is a newswriter for the Southern Baptist TEXAN, newjournal of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention. Her commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for length and style.

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### BAPTISTS

VOLUME 139 • NUMBER 34 • ISSN 0005-5778

Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$10.35 per year payable in advance. Economy plans available for cooperating Mississippi churches. Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items — one calendar week prior to requested publication date. Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to requested publication date. All submissions are subject to editing.





## Chick-fil-A slammed by Denver City Council

**DENVER (BP and local reports)** — A committee of the Denver City Council has stalled what was expected to be routine approval of a Chick-fil-A restaurant at the Denver International Airport after at least four council members expressed disapproval of what they erroneously characterized as the company's alleged opposition to same sex marriage.

During an Aug. 18 hearing, council member Robin Kniech said she was concerned about a local franchise generating "corporate profits used to fund and fuel discrimination." The Denver Post reported. Councilman Paul Lopez compared the pro-family stances of some Chick-fil-A leaders to presidential candidate Donald Trump's comments about immigration and other issues, calling opposition to the airport restaurant "really, truly a moral issue."

The council's Business Development Committee will take up the matter again at its Sept. 1 meeting. At issue is whether to approve a seven-year lease for a Chick-fil-A that would be operated by a 60%-40% partnership involving Atlanta-based Concessions International and Denver's Delarosa Restaurant Concepts. Chick-fil-A would receive seven percent of the restaurant's profits, according to The Post. If the committee rejects the lease, an individual member could still introduce the matter to the full council.

Delarosa President Mike De La Rosa told the committee all hiring would be conducted based on a nondiscrimination policy protecting individuals based on sexual orientation and gender identity, according to The Post.

Chick-fil-A does not maintain a policy of discrimination against homosexuals or same sex married individuals. Company CEO Dan Cathy, son of founder Truett Cathy, remarked in a June 2012 interview with The Biblical Recorder, news journal of North Carolina Baptists, "We are very

much supportive of the family — the biblical definition of the family unit."

Pro-homosexual groups have lobbied against Chick-fil-A ever since.

None of the committee's 13 members, 10 of whom were present, defended Chick-fil-A, The Post reported.

Denver International Airport's senior vice president of concessions Neil Maxfield said a 2013 survey of airport users identified Chick-fil-A as "the second-most sought-after quick service brand at the airport." DIA has estimated the restaurant would generate \$4.1 million in sales its first year, with more than \$600,000 paid to the airport in concession fees.

Most other fast-food concessions would generate less in seven days than Chick-fil-A is expected to generate in six, according to The Post, a reference to the chain's policy of closing on Sundays.

Even the liberal website Mother Jones came to Chick-fil-A's defense. "This stuff happened four years ago, and the company halted contributions to anti-gay groups a year later," Mother Jones' Kevin Drum wrote. "Cathy presumably still doesn't support gay marriage, but I really don't think that should be a precondition for winning a bid with a government agency."

"And when several council members go beyond that, raising questions about 'Chick-fil-A's religion-influenced operation,'" Drum continued, "all it does is confirm the worst hysteria from the right wing that merely being Christian is enough to arouse the hatred of the left. That's just wildly inappropriate."

Action Institute commentator Joe Carter wrote, "The behavior of the city council needs to be called out for what it is: anti-religious bigotry. This is unacceptable behavior, for the government officials are misusing their power to impose their views on citizens."



DAN CATHY

## Schools may flee council over same sex marriage issue

**ASHEVILLE, N.C. (BP and local reports)** — Several institutions plan to leave the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU) at the end of August, if at that time Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) and Goshen College are still members.

Last month EMU and Goshen announced they would begin hiring faculty and staff who are engaging in same sex marriage. The CCCCU, a coalition of 183 Christian colleges and universities around the world, initially said it would address the issue at the annual members meeting in January, but on July 28 the CCCCU board said it would begin contacting each member president to discuss the matter sooner.

Mississippi College in Clinton, one of the three institutions of higher learning affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention, is a CCCCU member. Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain indicated before the latest controversy erupted that it was considering membership in CCCCU, while William Carey University in Hattiesburg is not a member.

Union University in Jackson, Tenn., affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention, cited a slow process and general discontent with the CCCCU's direction when it became the first institution to withdraw from the group.

Others are poised to follow, according to member presidents who spoke to WORLD magazine, including Everett Piper, president of Oklahoma Wesleyan University in Bartlesville. The school is affiliated with the Wesleyan Church.

"The CCCCU's bewildering desire for a drawn-out 'conversation' has led everyone (including me) to conclude they think the Church's engagement in illicit sexual behavior is open for debate. Unfortunately, now, even if they ultimately do the right thing and remove EMU and Goshen from membership, the damage is done," Piper said.

Piper recounted a conversation he had last month with CCCCU president Shirley Hoogstra in which she compared differences on same sex marriage to disagreement on issues such as baptism or speaking in tongues. She urged respect for "institutional autonomy."

Piper told WORLD News Service, "You're not going to convince me that the volitional, behavioral act of sodomy or any other sexual act is on the same moral plane as speaking in tongues, baptism, and other doctrinal disagreements. Rather than being committed and convictional, we're having conversations."

## Guidestone injunction stands while appeal proceeds to top court

**DALLAS (BP and local reports)**

— The Tenth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals ruled Aug. 21 it would keep in place the preliminary injunction won earlier by GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention at the District Court level, while GuideStone appeals its case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The preliminary injunction, which protects certain ministries from having to provide abortion-causing drugs or devices in their health plan or face crippling fines under Obamacare, was first issued by a federal judge in December 2013. Upon the government's appeal, a three-judge panel of the Tenth Circuit of Appeals ruled 2-1 to end the injunction.

GuideStone, along with co-plaintiffs Reaching Souls International, an Oklahoma-based, non-Southern Baptist, missions

sending organization, and Truett-McConnell College, a Georgia Baptist institution, appealed the Tenth Circuit's ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court in July.

As religious employers, churches, and integrated auxiliaries of churches including GuideStone are already-exempt from the mandate and its penalties. GuideStone's current litigation is seeking to protect from the mandate and its penalties the other ministries it serves, such as children's homes, colleges, and other ministries not controlled by a church or association of churches.

"What this means is for the next several weeks, the ministries affected by the mandate can continue to rest assured that they are at no risk of penalties," said Harold R. Loftin Jr., general counsel for GuideStone, which is headquartered in Dallas.

It was early in the morning, still in the dark part of the day, when I heard the paper flop down on my driveway. It was only a sliver of a moon and so there was virtually no light as I went out to get the paper and read some of the good news. As I walked out toward where the paper was lying in the dark of the morning, I noticed a crack in the driveway. My first thought was Yazoo Clay had struck again, but when I got there and started to pick up the paper, the crack in my driveway coiled up. With my lightning-fast mind, I concluded it was not a crack in the concrete or a stick but it might just be a snake.

I looked around for something I could grab and beat him to death and I found nothing. I wanted to run to the garage and get a hoe but I was afraid he would slip off into the grass and I wouldn't be able to find him. So there we were having a stare-down in the darkness. He was not moving and I was not moving, and so I simply told him, "You stay right where you are. I'll be right back."

I took off, ran to the garage, got the hoe, turned on the front light, and there he was right where I'd told him to stay. I thanked him and gave him a few minutes to contemplate his exit from this world. Then just a few whacks and it was over.

Now, I do not believe trespassing is an offense that deserves the death penalty, but for a snake it seemed to be the right thing. I hate snakes and for those of you who are snake lovers, I apologize for my attitude but I just can't get where you are. I know you think they're beautiful. I know you would like to explain to me over and over how you would like to train me to understand the ones that are poisonous and the ones that are not. The problem is that even the ones



## Snakeology

who are not venomous still endanger my health by putting me on the edge of a heart attack. There are probably a hundred acres of forested, unused land around where I live and if snakes want to stay out there and stay out of my way, they're welcome to do so — but in my yard, on my driveway, in the darkness of the morning, if I have half a chance, I will help them move on to their eternal reward.

Snakes in the Bible are an interesting study. The first one we see is creating havoc for Adam and Eve by tempting them and encouraging them to go the wrong way. While I'm not blaming everything on the snake, he certainly didn't help matters. While I understand what He was trying to teach us, it still makes me uncomfortable when the Lord instructed us to be "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16). I know that snakes are intriguing because they can walk and not have any

legs. They are good for the environment because they eat insects and mice and rats, but I just can't get used to them being a part of my world.

I remember some years ago I had preached at a church one night and after a time of fellowship I was about to leave and the pastor came to me and said, "As you leave going down that dirt road, please drive slowly." I said, "Okay. Why?" I figured he was going to say that there are deer running across the road or cars that don't pay attention as they drive on that dark, country road but no, he said that there are black pine snakes that live between here and the highway and sometimes they are seen crossing the road and they are close to being an endangered species and we don't want them to be killed.

I looked at the pastor and said, "Well, I've got an even better idea than me driving slowly then." "What?" he asked. "Why

don't you go before me and check out your black pine snake friends and tell them you better get off the road because Jim Futral is coming this way and he doesn't love you like I do." He didn't laugh, but at least he smiled and said, "Well, just try to dodge them then." Fact was, I left watching for the snakes that might be passing back and forth and saw none.

As I think about snakes, they become a good analogy of what so many things in our world are like. There are good things that have been turned into bad things and bad things that resemble good things that we need to stay away from. There are people like this that you may run into that seem to be harmless and yet before you know it you discover they are toxic to your life. There are places you can go and events that you can be a part of that seem to be so nice and friendly, fun, and welcoming, only to find out that they will harm you, rob you, destroy you.

Watch and see people going into drinking establishments and what happens to so many of their lives. Watch what happens when people go to the glitz and glamour of the casinos. Over a period of time that establishment will leave them with nothing, and oftentimes it ruins more than just their pocketbooks. Watch what happens when someone gets trapped in an improper relationship, and it pulls them away to the point that their genuine relationships are harmed and their lives are crippled. There are snakes that are far worse than the one I encountered that morning. Neither you nor I have to worry about him anymore, but all these others are still around us all the time.

The author can be contacted at [directions@mbcb.org](mailto:directions@mbcb.org).

## GuideStone: Ride out market volatility with a solid plan

**DALLAS (GuideStone and local reports)** — This week's stock market drop, on the heels of disappointing financial markets performance over the last few days, has led to headlines and some investor concerns.

Long-term investors should continue to consider their objectives and time horizons, said a GuideStone financial specialist.

David S. Spika, global investment strategist at GuideStone Capital Management, LLC, a subsidiary of GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, offered a commentary posted on GuideStone's website that explained the nature of current volatility and offered perspective on the current market.

"As volatility rises, the best course of action is to ensure you invest with active managers who possess a strong track record, stay focused on the long term, and remain well-diversified," Spika wrote, likening market volatility to a roller coaster.

Many observers have expected some level of correction to occur at some point, given that markets had been on a long-term growth pattern since the market trough in 2009. The S&P 500 Index®, spurred on by the Federal Reserve's quantitative easing and

a near-zero Fed Funds rate, had gained more than 200% since 2009 and has not had a 10% or greater correction in more than three years, Spika observed.

Active management firms, like GuideStone, are thought by many to be better suited for volatile markets, which create more dispersion and lower correlations among stock prices, giving sub-advisors a better chance to identify companies that are undervalued, Spika said.

GuideStone President O.S. Hawkins echoed Spika's insights. "Long-term retirement investors should keep their focus on their goals, and not on short-term market fluctuations. Participants should focus on being appropriately diversified, their long-term investment objectives and time horizon, and less on day-to-day market moves."

When dealing with a period of volatility, GuideStone recommends keeping four principles in mind:

- Always focus on objectives, not emotions. Specifically regarding retirement participants, these assets are to serve needs for a long period of time. Make sure objectives and actions are consistent with a time horizon.

- Investors can choose to use GuideStone Advi-

sor's GPS: Guided Planning Services, to assist in determining an age-appropriate investment allocation.

- Avoid making impulsive decisions. "Guard against making ad hoc changes in your portfolio," Hawkins said. "Making changes based on short-term market movements is almost a guarantee for failure as it promotes 'buying high and selling low.'"

The performance of an account moving forward will be determined based on results of the financial markets in the future, not the past. Selling today cannot avoid yesterday's losses in a down market. Likewise, in an up market, yesterday's performance cannot be bought by investing in the hottest fund.

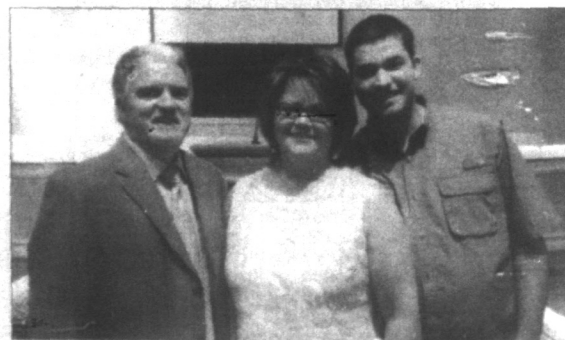
- Don't count losses (or gains). Consistent contribution to a retirement plan affords investors a systematic way of taking advantage of investment opportunities as markets ebb and flow.

- Maintain realistic expectations about market behavior. Financial markets in the short term tend to fluctuate in response to social, political, and economic events. However, the markets historically stabilize and return to profitability over the long-term, focusing on the underlying fundamentals.

## Staff Changes



**BRANCH CHURCH, MORTON**, has called Geary Walton as pastor. He is shown with his wife JoAnn.



**VALLEY GROVE CHURCH, PONTOTOC COUNTY**, has called Greg Herndon as pastor. He previously served First Church, Troy, Pontotoc County. He is shown with wife Beverly and son Evan.



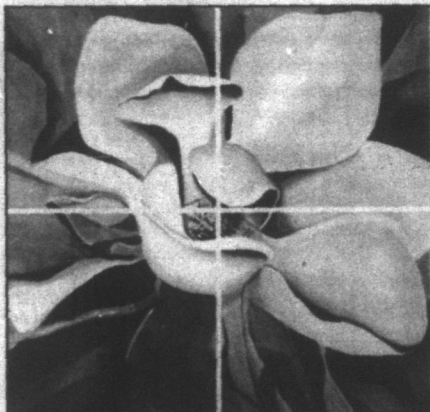
What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

August 27, 2015

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.



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**October 24, 2015**

**Mississippi College, Clinton, MS**

Registration - noon • Program - 1:00 p.m. • Game - 3:00 p.m.  
Contact Men's Ministry at 800-748-1651, Ext. 335

## 44<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CHURCH LIBRARY MINISTRY CONFERENCE

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Contact Communication Services for more information at 800-748-1651, Ext. 378, or 601-292-3378. E-mail: jchen@mbcb.org.



## MISSISSIPPI MISSIONARY FELLOWSHIP

**Saturday, September 19, 2015**

**8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

**Garaywa Camp and Conference Center, Clinton, MS**



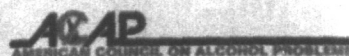
## MISSISSIPPI MISSIONARY PARENTS FELLOWSHIP

**Friday-Saturday, September 18-19, 2015**

**2:00 p.m. Friday - 12:30 p.m. Saturday**

**Garaywa Camp and Conference Center, Clinton, MS**

For registration and more information contact Paula Smith,  
WMU - 601-292-3336, E-mail: psmith@mbcb.org



**SEPTEMBER 14-15  
HYATT PLACE CONFERENCE ROOM  
RIDGELAND, MS**

The Christian Action Commission will host the American Council on Alcohol Problems (ACAP) annual meeting. ACAP is a federation of 37 states that believes education and public policy can reduce alcohol and drug related problems: death, dependency, disease, delinquency (including crime), dollars spent (economic cost), and disruption of family life and society.

This meeting provides speakers on these issues and also provides a platform where likeminded persons can address these issues with a united voice. Individuals and organizations that share these concerns are encouraged to attend.

For more information or to register contact:  
Christian Action Commission at 601-292-3329

## Mississippi Baptist Singing Churchwomen

**September 11-12  
Lake Tiak-O-Khata, Louisville**

Contact Cathy Taylor in Church Music for  
more information, 1-800-748-1651, Ext. 267.

For more information or to receive  
an application, go to  
[www.mbc.org/church\\_growth/church\\_music](http://www.mbc.org/church_growth/church_music)

## Merry Christmas!

to pastors in the Baptist Convention of New York through the Suit Project ministry.

Every year we seek to bless pastors and their wives with gifts, sending pastors new suits and their wives gift cards. This ministry has been blessing ministers and their families since 1963. Join in making the holidays even more special for these ministers by giving to the suit project. Donations to this ministry can be a rewarding fundraising project for any group in your church: Royal Ambassadors, Girls in Action, WMU, Men's Ministry, VBS, or youth.

To make donations, or for more information contact the Men's Ministry Department of the MBCC at 800-748-1651, Ext. 335, 601-292-3335, or E-mail: [dvail@mbcb.org](mailto:dvail@mbcb.org).



## Ministers' Wives CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 26, 2015  
FBC, JACKSON,  
5TH FLOOR

We welcome Diana Davis as our speaker. She enjoys encouraging ministry wives and training women in church leadership. Diana is a minister's wife, for over 32 years. Minister's wife of Steve Davis, vice president of SBC's NAMB, South region, her newest publication is "6 Simple Steps: Find Contentment & Joy as a Minister's Wife." Ministers' wives are welcome to join us for an afternoon of great fellowship and fulfillment.



Register by contacting Cathy Taylor at [cwtaylor@mbcb.org](mailto:cwtaylor@mbcb.org).

## JANUARY BIBLE STUDY PREVIEW

SEPTEMBER 8, 2015  
BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE,  
BLUE MOUNTAIN

SEPTEMBER 29, 2015  
GARAYWA CAMP &  
CONFERENCE CENTER,  
CLINTON

SEPTEMBER 15, 2015  
WILLIAM CAREY UNIV.,  
HATTIESBURG

Leaders:

Blue Mountain - Ronald Meeks  
William Carey - Daniel Caldwell  
Garaywa - Wayne VanHorn

Provided by your Cooperative Program and your  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board  
Sunday School & Small Groups Team, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39206  
If you need more information or assistance with registration, contact  
Carolyn Day, 1-800-748-1651, Ext. 291 or 601-292-3291, [cday@mbcb.org](mailto:cday@mbcb.org)



## Mother Daughter OVERNIGHT

Mother/Daughter is on October 16-17, and November 6-7, 2015 at Garaywa Camp & Conference Center. We will begin at 5 p.m. on Friday and end at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday. You will be involved in events such as a missionary visit, worship, ropes course, crafts and much more. This is the perfect opportunity to get away from the world and invest in a 1st-6th grade girl in your life.

Registration forms are online at [garaywa.org](http://garaywa.org).

Cost= \$50 per person

Please call Garaywa Camp & Conference Center at 601-924-7034 for more information.  
Sponsored by the Women's Missionary Union.

## Celebrate the SMALL STRONG CONGREGATION

• A ONE OF A KIND EVENT

- Dr. Chuck Lawless
  - The Power of Small
  - Guarding The Heart for Effective Ministry
  - Outside the Walls
  - Groups Matter
- The "take aways" will be awesome!

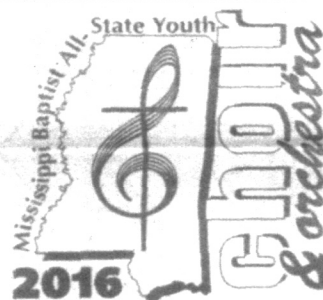
SEPTEMBER 24, 2015 • First Baptist Church, Jackson  
[www.mbcb.org/smallstrong](http://www.mbcb.org/smallstrong)

### REGISTRATION

In order to accommodate the participants, advance registration is important. To register go to [www.mbcb.org/smallstrong](http://www.mbcb.org/smallstrong) and select REGISTER. The cost is \$20 per person. Those who register before August 1 will receive a 20% discount. Pastors who bring their Deacon Chairman may register the chairman at no cost to the church by selecting DEACON (special conditions apply) at [www.mbcb.org/smallstrong](http://www.mbcb.org/smallstrong).

If getting online is a problem - call Carolyn Day, 601-292-3291 or 1-800-748-1651, Extension 291 and she will process your registration on your behalf.

CONTACT THE SUNDAY SCHOOL/SMALL GROUP DEPT. 800-748-1651, Ext. 291



2015 Auditions for the 2016 Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth Choir and Orchestra. Open to 9th-12th graders involved in the music ministry of MS Southern Baptist Churches

PLEASE REGISTER 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO THE AUDITION.

Saturday, September 12, 2015  
10:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.  
FBC Columbia

Sunday, September 13, 2015  
1:30 - 4:00 P.M.  
FBC Long Beach

Thursday, September 17, 2015  
4:00 - 7:00 P.M.  
Fairview BC, Columbus

Sunday, September 20, 2015  
1:30 - 4:00 P.M.  
North Oxford BC, Oxford

Thursday, October 1, 2015  
4:00 - 7:00 P.M.  
FBC, Meridian

Saturday, October 17, 2015  
1:00 - 4:00 P.M.  
Baptist Building

Sunday, October 18, 2015  
2:00 - 5:00 P.M.  
Baptist Building

For more information contact the Church Music Department of the MBCB at 800-748-1651, Ext. 267, or 601-292-3267, E-mail [cwtaylor@mbcb.org](mailto:cwtaylor@mbcb.org)

Pray this day for...

August 28 – September 10, 2015

*"praying at all times in the Spirit... To that end keep alert with perseverance, making supplication for all the saints..."*

*Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)*

Pray for: **Shelia Flowers**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through financial administration.

Pray for: **Robert & Margaret Fortenberry**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **David & Gloria Glaze**, missionaries ministering to Deaf Peoples through media consultation and promotion.

Pray for: **Clarence Frank & Phoebe Harrison**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples.

Pray for: **Kenneth & Kimberly Hathcock**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through student evangelism, church/home outreach.

Pray for: **Thomas & Bonnie Hearon**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through strategy coordination.

Pray for: **Earl & Ramona Hewitt**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through medicine and church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Raymond & Cynthia Hodgins**, missionaries ministering to Deaf Peoples through sports evangelism, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Jeffery & Lissa Holeman**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through strategy coordination.

Pray for: **Janet Holloway**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through student evangelism.

Pray for: **Ronald & Beverly Holmes**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church planting, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Daniel & Claudia Hood**, missionaries ministering to North African & Middle Eastern Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

The IMB missionaries listed in the HouseTops prayer calendar are currently active in 2-4 year terms or in career service.



# COOPERATIVE PROGRAM DINNER

THURSDAY | OCTOBER 1 | 6:30 P.M.

*Harrisburg Baptist Church, Tupelo*

PASTORS, STAFF, CHAIRMAN OF DEACONS,  
FINANCIAL/BUDGET CHAIRMEN AND SPOUSES

DR. FUTRAL, SPEAKER

NO COST, BUT YOU MUST RSVP TO LISA LEAVELL AT 601-293-3347  
OR LLEAVELL@MBCB.ORG BY FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25.

RICK BLYTHE, DIRECTOR OF CP/STEWARDSHIP PROMOTION

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT THE  
STEWARDSHIP/CP PROMOTION DEPT. OF THE MBCB AT  
800-748-1651, EXT. 347, OR 601-293-3347.

# Unveiled

*Women's Retreat*

**October 9-10, 2015**

Garaywa Camp and  
Conference Center

Our theme, "Unveiled" comes from 2 Corinthians 3:18, with prayers this will be an enriching get-away for women of all ages. Cyndi Grace is our featured speaker with Mary Moak leading in worship and praise.

\$25 plus housing and meals

Contact the MS WMU at 800-748-1651, Ext. 319 or  
visit

<http://www.mbc.org/event/womens-retreat/>

# HOUSE TOPS



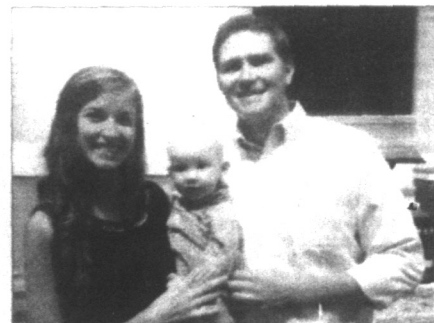
## Just for the Record



The WMU of **BETHANY CHURCH, CALHOUN ASSOCIATION**, recently asked members to fill water bottles with change for Pure Water, Pure Love, collecting \$851.50 July 5. WMU members are Naomi Stephens, Dot Hardin, Marlene McPhail, Marilyn Williams, Carol Easley, and Ida Cheeseman. Anthony Stephens, pastor.



**DESOTO CHURCH, CLARKE ASSOCIATION**, recently honored Virginia Pettis for 25 years service as Sunday School secretary. She was presented a plaque and dinner on the grounds was held in her honor. Keith Yelverton, pastor.



**VALLEY GROVE CHURCH, PONTOTOC COUNTY**, recently ordained Cory Finn to the ministry. He has served as youth minister for the past three years and is attending New Orleans Seminary. Shown are Finn, son Oliver, and wife Chelsea.

## MS POSITIONS

**FULL-TIME PASTOR FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH, STURGIS, MS.** Send applications or nominations to PastorSearch@friendshipsturgis.com or to Friendship BC, 5491 Craig Springs Rd, Sturgis, MS 39769. See friendshipsturgis.com for more information.

**NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH IN MONTICELLO, MS. IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL/PART TIME YOUTH MINISTER.** Please send resume to New Hope Baptist Church, 618 Carmel New Hope Rd, Monticello, MS. 39654. You may call 601-320-2785 for more information.

**BUGATUNNA BAPTIST CHURCH IN CLARKE COUNTY IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR BI-VOCATIONAL OR FULL-TIME PASTOR.** Please send resumes to: 10806 CR514, Meridian, MS 39301.

**EASTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH IN INDIANOLA, MS. IS IN SEARCH OF A FULL-TIME PASTOR.** Please send resumes to Pastor Search Committee, P. O. Box 466, Indianola, MS. 38751 or e-mail to Shirley Betts at s\_betts@bellsouth.net.

**GUNTER ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH IN FLORENCE, MS IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR.** Please submit resumes to Gunter Road Search Committee C/O Craig Dukes 2209 Woodland Place Florence, MS 39073 or rcdukes@bellsouth.net.

**EASTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH IN INDIANOLA, MS. IS IN SEARCH OF A FULL-TIME PASTOR.** Please send resumes to Pastor Search Committee, P. O. Box 466, Indianola, MS. 38751 or e-mail to Shirley Betts at s\_betts@bellsouth.net.

**BAPTIST CHURCH IN THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE AREA IS SEEKING A FULL-TIME CHRISTIAN, COMPASSIONATE CHURCH SECRETARY** with a minimum of 1 year experience performing general office work. Excellent computer knowledge and telephone skills will be a plus. Resumes will ONLY be accepted by mail: Search Committee, 510 Lake Valley Drive, Starkville, MS 39759 or by e-mail: sr\_parks@bellsouth.net.

**BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH, A SMALL COUNTRY CHURCH BETWEEN DREW AND RULEVILLE, MISS. IN SUNFLOWER COUNTY, IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR THE POSITION OF BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR.** Please send resumes to P.O. Box 249, Drew, Miss. 38737.

**SMITHVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING A FULL-TIME STUDENT MINISTER.** Please send resume to Smithville Baptist Church, P.O. Box 52, Smithville, MS 38870.

**OAK HILL CHURCH IN MERIDIAN IS SEEKING A FULL-TIME CHURCH SECRETARY.** Send resume to P.O. Box 3938, Meridian, MS 39303.

## CLASSIFIEDS

**ILLINOIS BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME SEEKS AN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO REPLACE CURRENT DIRECTOR'S RETIREMENT THE END OF 2016.** Applications are to be received by January 2016 to fill the position by October 2016. Go to [www.bchf.com/employment.html](http://www.bchf.com/employment.html) for details.

**FIVE CEMETERY PLOTS IN CHRISTUS GARDENS OF LAKEWOOD SOUTH.** Appraised for \$2000 each; will sell for \$1500 each. Four together, one separate. 601-853-2283.

**RAGGERROOS: A COMEDY WASHTUB BAND.** We sing, play instruments, and tell jokes. Call us at 601-857-0736.

**READY TO SELL YOUR BUSINESS?** We specialize in the confidential sale of businesses to qualified buyers. We work one-on-one with business owners from coaching through closing to get your business SOLD. Learn more at [www.CapitalSouthBusinessAlliance.com](http://www.CapitalSouthBusinessAlliance.com) For a no-pressure, no-obligation meeting call David Young at 601-942-9722 or email: [csdavid32@gmail.com](mailto:csdavid32@gmail.com)

**STAINED GLASSWORKS, INC., serving MS & AL since 1992.** Call 800-605-2970

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**OAK CHURCH PEWS WITH CUSHIONS,** \$12.50 per foot, Hickory Grove, Sumrall. Contact 601-299-0638 for information.

**GATLINBURG RENTAL:** Cabin \$95/night. Contact: 832-922-0401 or Email: [pdw4760@att.net](mailto:pdw4760@att.net) for information and booking.

**STAINED GLASS:** new windows and repairs. Hopper Stained Glass, Jackson. 601-502-0202.

**WINDOW AND SCREEN SHOP** — windows and storm windows built to fit your opening. Plus new window screens and rescreen old screens. Call Tom Cook 601-709-4879.

**CHURCH PEW UPHOLSTERY, FREE ESTIMATES.** Davis Upholstery, Quitman, Miss., phone 601-776-6617.

**WWW.SEBRENHOMEIMPROVEMENT.COM.** Christian owned Don & Rita Sebrén. 601-992-2092. All home improvements, siding, energy efficient windows, metal & shingle roofs, screen & sunrooms, patio covers, decks, room additions, kitchen & bath upgrades.

**AFFORDABLE BEACHSIDE VACATION CONDOS:** Gulf Shores & Orange Beach, AL. Rent direct from Christian Family Owners, lowest prices on the Beach. [www.gulfshorescondos.com](http://www.gulfshorescondos.com), 205-556-0368, 205-752-1231, 251-752-2366.



**FELLOWSHIP CHURCH, MATHISTON**, held a baby dedication for James Colton Pollard, son of Rodney and Lisa Pollard; and for Thomas Ross McKinney, son of Mitch and Donna McKinney. Ralph Cain, pastor.

## In other Church News:

► **First Church, Bay St. Louis**, is recognizing the 10-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina Aug. 30, 10:30 a.m. The church wishes to reconnect with volunteers and churches who ministered to the church. RSVP to [www.fbcbsl.com/katrina/katrina10](http://www.fbcbsl.com/katrina/katrina10) or call (228) 467-4005 so that arrangements can be made for food and seating.

► **Tillatoba Church, Yalobusha Association**, will host Messiah's Men in concert Aug. 31, 6 p.m. Love offering.

► **First Church, Runnelstown**, will host Mountain Faith, a bluegrass gospel group from North Carolina, Sept. 11, 7 p.m. Love offering.

► The State of Mississippi Championship Horse Show will host Cowboy Church Sept. 13, 7 p.m., Equine Center, State Fairgrounds. Greg Renfrow, **First Church, Steens**, will be preaching. For more information, call (601) 504-4945.

► **First Church, Morton**, will bid farewell to community pastor Earl Clark and his wife Jane Aug. 30 11 a.m. The Clarks will move to Simpson County to begin "semi-retirement."

► The Ugandan Thunder Children's Choir from Africa will be at **Academy Church, Blue Mountain**, Sept. 8, 7 p.m. The 22 children, ages 9 – 16, are from Royal School and Orphanage in Uganda.

► **Wheeler Grove Church, Corinth**, is hosting Lovelace Homecoming Aug. 29, 6 p.m.



Veterans of **TOOMSUBA CHURCH, TOOMSUBA**, were presented homemade patriotic quilts in recognition of their service July 5. Shown are Tommy Swain, Denny Morgan, Elizabeth Lagrone, Pat Davoll, and Melvin Lackey.



During homecoming at **NEW HENLEYFIELD CHURCH, CARRIERE**, Phyllis Wise was presented a plaque by pastor Ray Allen recognizing her years of service to the church.

## KATRINA

cont. from p. 1

"The disaster relief teams of the SBC are second to none," says former SBC president Fred Luter, who has pastored New Orleans' Franklin Avenue Church for nearly three decades. "I don't just say that for what I've heard or read about. I say that because of what I've seen first-hand."

"Being there in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, I saw missionaries and disaster relief volunteers come here from all over the country to help those of us in the city, whether it was to gut out our homes or our churches, or to help us to paint, or cut grass."

Mickey Caison, who directed SBDK efforts when Hurricane Katrina hit, notes that the additional volunteers helped to vastly increase the capacity of SBDK and boost its perception among fellow disaster relief organizations.

"There was a significant change in the perception of Southern Baptists coming out of Katrina," Caison says. "We went from an organization that worked with Red Cross and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) to an organization worthy of a relationship and a commitment from FEMA."

"It gave us a different kind of credibility in the eyes of emergency managers and government officials."

That kind of response raised the profile of Southern Baptists with national media outlets like The Wall Street Journal, and throughout all levels of government.

"It opened doors that normally we couldn't even get close to knocking on. One of [the doors] was national media," says Jim Burton, who oversaw



**MAKING PLANS** - Members of a Southern Baptist Disaster Relief mass feeding unit meet with partners from the Salvation Army to lay out an outdoor kitchen and begin feeding operations for some of the millions of meals that would be prepared for evacuees, victims, and emergency workers in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina's landfall on August 29, 2005. (BP photo)

SBDK as the director of volunteer mobilization at NAMB at the time. "We got much, much better at telling our story through secular media. When the government got around to doing a report in 2006 to evaluate what had happened, they were all over the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief response

with praise, according to what had been accomplished there."

"What most observers could not understand or measure was the sense of call our volunteers had to serve Katrina survivors. That obedience to God's purpose for them as individual Christian volunteers drove our commitment to excellence and caring."

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## Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electroni-

cally via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. **Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted.** Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

## BIBL i O C I P H E R

CMB, UGKD, OKPB, SM UGY

WYHSMMSMH GCJU OCSB UGY

LKDMBCUSKM KL UGY YCPUG; CMB

UGY GYCYMJ CPY UGY AKPEJ KL

UGSMY GCMBJ.

GYWPYAJ KMY: UYM

Clue: B = D

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Ephesians 5:2

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

## Need a light?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.



## The Final Act • Revelation 21:1-7

One of the great blessings I have as a pastor is officiating the wedding ceremony of two Christian believers. After months of planning, hours of pre-marital counseling, and every tiny detail having been worked out, the wedding day arrives. All the work behind the scenes, the music selected, the food prepared, the vows rehearsed and the family and guests seated culminate into the moment when the bride enters the room. In that instant, every eye is on her. She is the focal point as she proceeds down the aisle. Every step she takes is deliberate and brings her closer to the moment she has waited for all of her life. She is beautiful, smiling, and even radiant as she approaches the groom. Filled with a million emotions and thoughts, the father of the bride escorts her to her waiting partner. He "gives her away" (although he will always see her as his little girl) and the wedding service begins.

There are a lot of words that can be used to describe a wedding, but maybe none more fitting than the word "beginning." Think about it. It is the beginning of a new family. It is the beginning of two lives becoming one, the beginning of a new home, the beginning of new adventures and blessings that would otherwise not be realized.

Beginnings is exactly what God has in mind when we come to the conclusion of the Book of Revelation. Mentioned in the teachings of Christ through parables and among other places, we are called the bride of Christ. When someone attends a wedding ceremony no one comments, "Well, that's the end of single life," or "No more only one paycheck to spend." Instead, the focus is on what lies ahead. When we become Christians, we are indicating our desire for Christ to change our future.

With all of its symbolism and various interpretations, that is the heartbeat of Revelation: our future and eternity with God and His final victory over evil. A couple on their wedding day is filled with hope and anticipation for what is in store. House buying, possible relocation, starting a family and a host of other possibilities all seem to be begging for their

attention. The sky is the limit and they are consumed with excitement.

Now, let us come back down to earth for a moment and check in with the author of Revelation, the Apostle John. The focal point of our lesson is Revelation 21:1-7. I assure you, if you start reading, you will not stop with 21:7. You will more than likely finish the chapter and the remainder of the book. God allows him to see things too beautiful for us to imagine.

When it comes to Heaven, people are consumed with questions. "What will it look like?" is among the more popular inquiries. John tells us some of what to expect in chapters 21 and 22.

I don't know about you, but the two things I am looking forward to the most in heaven is what's not there and who is there. Revelation 21:4 reveals there will be no tears, death, mourning, crying or pain. That is good news! Also, I

am thankful for who is there. Family members, friends and individuals from the Scripture will all be important to me, but not as much as seeing Christ face to face. These truths are a great comfort to me and should be to you as well if you have trusted in Christ for salvation. I can also safely conclude these facts were a tremendous blessing to John. He was exiled, but not defeated. Cast off from society, but cared for by his Savior. You, my friend, are no different!

There is a great wedding day coming, church! Are you ready, bride? The hour is coming. I recall a few years ago a television commercial advertising men's tuxedos made the statement, "When everyone in the room is looking at her, she will be looking at you." Mississippi Baptists, when Jesus looks upon us, we will be looking at Him and perhaps for the first time, realize it has all been worth it. Revelation (and the Scripture) closes with a promise from Jesus and blessing of grace (22:20, 21). I can conclude with nothing better. God bless you as you serve Him and faithfully wait His return.

McKay is pastor of Harperville Church, Harperville.



### Explore the Bible

with Bobby McKay

## Hospitality: How Ordinary People Can Live On Mission • Luke 14:12-24

I can flat make incredible cornbread. The problem is that is just about all that I can cook really well. But, I do love inviting people over to our house. Thankfully, my husband is a great cook but not so good at inviting people or cleaning up, so we make a good team. Eating together and hanging out in our home has been a wonderful way for us to get to know people and understand their journey with God. Jesus encouraged us to "Practice Hospitality" (Romans 12:13). The best definition of hospitality is a love of strangers. This practical practice is an excellent way to show God's care and love.

In Luke 14, Jesus was invited to Sunday lunch at the home of a prominent Pharisee. I can imagine there were several "prominent Pharisees" who were vying for the attention of Jesus, each of them trying to outdo the other in order to have Jesus of Nazareth over for Sunday dinner.

I don't think the lunch went exactly like the Pharisee pictured it because Jesus does three things that were unexpected. First of all, he healed one of the Sunday guests of a large growth and the challenged those who were in attendance with the law of healing on the Sabbath. Secondly, he noticed how the guests were competing and picking the choice

spots at the table so he reminded them to choose the life of the servant and humility. Lastly, Jesus challenged the group to give hospitality and a meal to people who could not repay the favor-to give with no expectation of return.

Jesus illustrates this last teaching with a parable in Luke 14:16-24. He uses it dually to teach more on hospitality and to remind his followers the cost of discipleship. This parable shows the many excuses we give for not chasing after God and a great illustration on what hospitality really should look like. The first two excuses are about material possessions-purchasing land and oxen. The fact is that our material possessions do often prevent us from honoring God with all that we are. Possessions take up our time, our energy, our money and our focus. The third excuse has to do with a man who puts his family before the Lord. The best thing we can do for our

family? We should love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, and strength and live that before them.

The last part of Luke 14:21 tell the servant what to do when the invited would not come, "Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame." In other words, invite those people who

NEED a meal, who NEED a relationship, who NEED a friend, who NEED a Christian family to show them the right way to live.

Hospitality is just the avenue, the excuse to lead people to salvation found only in Christ. The goal is not a friend, or a meal or comfort but rather allow Christ through our lives in a compelling way.

### Walk

When is the last time you practiced hospitality? Do not limit yourself to hospitality only like a meal but rather ask God that He would show you places and

spaces in your life that you could show love to a stranger. Don't make it hard or complicated. Love on a college student by inviting them for coffee and conversation.

### Run

Sit down at supper tonight and talk with your family. Brainstorm together names of people and needs. Pick out a person or family that your family can practically meet their physical need and have them in your home. Like next week.

### Soar

Know that extra bedroom in your house? Those leftovers you consistently throw out? Pray and ask God to use your family and your house as a safe place for those who are in need. Then, call someone on your church staff and volunteer your resources to meet the need.

Remember to love your world fiercely and madly like Jesus would-using hospitality as a means to truth and light. And, if you need my secret cornbread recipe, shoot me an email and I will be glad to send it to you...but only if you promise to give it away.

Bowman is Minister of Connection, First Church, Brandon, and a speaker for women's events.

### Bible Studies for Life

with Beth S. Bowman



## Revivals & Homecomings

► **Fairfield Church, Moselle:** Homecoming, Aug. 30; Sunday School, 8:45; services, 10 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds, antique display, and more. Roy Moore, speaker.

► **Enon Church, Batesville:** 75th anniversary, Sept. 13,

beginning at 10 a.m.; special music by former song leaders, sharing of church history, and potluck lunch; James Clutter, speaker; Keith Bolen, pastor.

► **Pilgrim's Rest Church, Batesville:** Homecoming, Sept. 6, 10:30 a.m., followed

by dinner on the grounds and singing; Daniel Boyd, speaker; Roger Howell, music.

► **Siloam Church, Siloam Community:** Homecoming, Aug. 30; worship, 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch; Mike Davis, speaker; Hilmer Bynum and Roger Welch, music; Raymond Jeffcoat, pastor.

► **Springdale Church, Ripley:** Revival, Aug. 30 - Sept.

2; Sun., 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Randy Bostick, speaker; Anthony Mitchell and Kevin Hamilton, music.

► **Bethany Church, Potts Camp:** Homecoming, Aug. 31; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by fellowship meal; Jim Burke, speaker.

► **Vardaman Church, Kemper County:** Homecoming,

Sept. 6, 10:30 a.m., followed by potluck lunch; Kermit Sharp, speaker; Dennis Robinson, pastor.

► **Sand Hill Church, Attala County:** Revival, Aug. 30 - Sept. 2; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed. - Mon., children and youth night, 6 p.m.; Family night Tues., 6 p.m.; fellowship meal Wed., 6 p.m.; Ed Newman and Danny Lanier, speakers.

# 'Orange Sunday' held at CrossPoint, Hattiesburg

By Tony Martin  
Associate Editor

A sea of orange washed over a worship service in June at CrossPoint Community Church in Hattiesburg. Church members dressed in orange. Senior and founding pastor Dean Register preached in an orange jumpsuit. Participants were given orange bracelets reading, "Remember, Pray, Stand." The color was everywhere.

It was Orange Sunday, a day to remember in prayer the persecuted church and the Christians in other parts of the world who have been — and are being — executed for their faith by Islamic extremists while being forced to wear orange-colored coveralls.

"This was born out of conviction," said Register. "I could no longer be silent. I saw these men getting their necks sliced, all because they believe in Jesus."

Register said Christians are being threatened and persecuted for their beliefs in re-

gions such as Iraq, Syria, and Algeria. "Would I be willing to have someone cut my throat because of my passion for Jesus?" asked Register.

Register said he began pondering the persecuted church after reading a book by Richard Wurmbrand, a Romanian Christian imprisoned and tortured in his home country because of his faith. When Register was pastor of First Church, Gulfport, he invited Wurmbrand, who founded Voice of the Martyrs, to speak at the church. Wurmbrand shared with the church how he had been tortured and beaten for refusing to renounce Christ.

"To hear what he went through [had an] impact on my life," Register said.

After the release of the recent videos showing the orange-suited Christians being beheaded, Register led the church to organize the Orange Sunday event. "We're going to be a voice for the voiceless. We will speak out," he said.

Register recalls he was advised by some law enforcement officers to be cautious. "That orange jumpsuit makes you a target," he quoted the officers as warning him.

The Orange Sunday service was designed to raise awareness of the extrajudicial killings of Christians for their faith, Register said, but it was also intended to ensure that the victims who have already been executed aren't forgotten by people in the free world.

He noted from the words of an Iraqi Christian: "We expect to be persecuted, but we've been forgotten by Western Christians."

On Orange Sunday, Register preached on surrender. "This is the ultimate surrender," Register said. "By life or death, we are going to exalt Christ."

Register said American Christians should see persecution in other parts of the world as it truly is. "It's one thing to have our hands slapped in the work-

place [in the U.S.], but that's not persecution. If we're to be persecuted, it needs to be because of our righteousness."

The Orange Sunday service was a sweet, humbling worship time, Register said. "There were lots of tears, but we came away with a fresh resolve to remember, pray, and stand."

The Hattiesburg American newspaper quoted church member Todd Jackson as observing, "It's easy for all of us in this incredible country and community to get comfortable in our daily lives and all the blessings that we have, but we have to remember that there are thousands of Christians around the world who are putting their lives on the line every day. We want to stand with them and let them know that they're not just in a far-away place and forgotten."

"As Southern Baptists, we need to let our voice be heard [on this issue]," Register said. "We don't want to experience the displeasure of God."



## BROTHERS IN ORANGE

— Dean Register, senior and founding pastor of CrossPoint Community Church in Hattiesburg, preaches in an orange jumpsuit in sympathy with the Christians who have been executed in orange jumpsuits for their faith. (BR special photo)

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# JANUARY BIBLE STUDY PREVIEW

## TIMES AT ALL LOCATIONS

Registration 8:00 am - 8:30 am  
Conference 9:00 am - Noon

## NEW TIME FOR BIVOCATIONAL PASTORS

P.M. Registration 6:00 - 6:30 p.m.  
Conference 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

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